

## THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE ARMY FIELD SUPPORT BRIGADE

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Army Field Support Brigades (AFSBs) are relatively new Brigade level Army logistics organizations, officially established in 2006. They serve as the U.S. Army Materiel Command's (AMC) primary interface with Army forces and as a bridge between the generating and operating forces. Army Field Support Brigades mission is to provide AMC national-level sustainment support and serve as key synchronizers of related acquisition, logistics, and technology (ALT) support to Army units worldwide. They have successfully supported the Army's transformation process by executing missions and tasks that they were fully resourced with personnel, to perform. The AFSBs' mission execution is heavily reliant on contractor support.

Army Field Support Brigades must continue to adapt their logistics processes and capabilities as the Army continues to transform and operate in an era of "persistent engagement" where Army forces deploy for extended periods of time. This adaptation will help AFSBs maintain their ability to support units with their constantly changing sustainment requirements. However, as AFSBs adapt their logistics support processes

to be able to execute future missions AFSBs will need additional personnel. The question is: will the additional personnel be government, contractors, or both?



## THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE ARMY FIELD SUPPORT BRIGADE

Army Field Support Brigades (AFSBs) are relatively new Army logistics organizations, officially established in 2006. They serve as the U.S. Army Materiel Command's (AMC) primary interface with Army forces and serve as bridge between the generating and operating forces. Army Field Support Brigades are structured according to a mix of Modified Table of Equipment and Table of Distribution Authorizations and are designed to deploy in support of brigade and higher-level maneuver units. Army Field Support Brigades mission is to provide AMC national-level sustainment support and serve as key synchronizers of acquisition, logistics, and technology (ALT) support to Army units worldwide. They provide specialized, tailorable, and deployable support from both operational and tactical echelons of command across the entire spectrum of military operations.

Organized as subordinate commands under the Army Sustainment Command (ASC), AFSBs rely heavily on contractors to execute the missions specified in the Army Field Support Brigade's interim Field Manual 4-91, January 29, 2010. Mission accomplishment requires close coordination among AFSB commanders and their staffs with ASC, Program Managers, Program Executive Officers, Life Cycle Management Centers and contracting officers. Mission accomplishment also requires detailed tracking and prioritization of all related mission components such as new equipment fielding and the movement of equipment through the Army's reset process.

Since their establishment, AFSBs have successfully sustained unit deployments in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom by providing on-time national and operational level supplies, services, and equipment. They have also supported the

Army's transformation process from a division centric force to a modular force. Army Field Support Brigades support to the transformation process has required them to execute missions and tasks that they were not fully established or resourced to perform. One example is Army Pre-positioned Stocks Battalions morphed into theater enabler battalions.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, AFSBs have been executing key responsibilities and tasks within the Army's Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process. The execution of these responsibilities has allowed the Army to deploy and redeploy units faster and more efficiently in the current fast-paced demanding environment.

Currently, the Army operates in an era of "persistent engagement". In this environment, Army forces must deploy for extended periods of time currently in Iraq and Afghanistan. Following deployments, they must reconstitute, refit, and train in order to be ready for subsequent deployments.<sup>2</sup> AMC and its subordinate units—like Army Sustainment Command (ASC), must continue to adapt their logistics processes and capabilities as the Army continues to transform. Army Materiel Command must sustain its ability to support units with constantly changing sustainment requirements. This adaptation will, inevitably, necessitate AFSBs' missions and roles to change in the future.

In order to fully understand how AFSBs missions and roles will have to change to be able to continue supporting units as the Army continues to transform, it is important to consider the rationale for their establishment: Did Army transformation facilitate AMC's decision to establish AFSBs? What missions and roles are AFSBs currently performing, both in the continental United States (CONUS) and outside of CONUS? How do AFSBs support the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process? What will

AFSBs missions and roles be as the Army continues to transform? Will AFSBs need additional personnel to execute future missions and roles? This SRP reviews the factors and conditions that led to AMC's decision—(with Army approval)—to establish AFSBs. Additionally, the SRP highlights AFSBs current roles and execution of missions as they operate within the Army's Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process. The SRP also considers how AFSBs' missions and roles may change as the Army continues to transform including the identification of personnel challenges. Lastly, it provides recommendations to help mitigate future challenges caused by Army transformation, ARFORGEN requirements, and a shift back to training for full spectrum operations as operations in support of Operation New Dawn ends and the Army moves to a balanced force. Operation New Dawn began on September 1, 2010: it marked the official end of Operation Iraqi Freedom and U.S. combat operations in Iraq.<sup>3</sup>

#### Why AFSBs – Background?

The Army had great combat successes during the beginning stages of Operational Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The logistics buildup leading to these combat operations centered around one of the largest logistics supply and support efforts since Operation Desert Storm. This complex endeavor included moving personnel, equipment, and supplies from the continental United States through logistics support bases in Kuwait and Qatar to Iraq. The Army Sustainment Command (ASC), then called the Army Field Support Command, was a key player in supporting combat operations in OIF. Army Sustainment Command used its available support capabilities of Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS), Logistics Support Elements (LSEs), and Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) contracting to plan, move, and stage equipment and

supplies. The ASC successfully provided critical logistics support to conduct and sustain combat operations.

Despite the logistical anticipation of combat sustainment requirements by moving additional equipment and supplies from Europe and afloat to Kuwait, Army logistics professionals experienced widespread problems with identifying and transporting supplies and equipment to units. Among these problems were poor asset visibility, insufficient and ineffective theater distribution, Army Prepositioned Stocks configured by commodities instead of by priority of issue, and a lack of oversight of ineffective DOD contractors hired to provide logistics support.<sup>4</sup>

Army Materiel Command and its subordinate organizations provided the logistics muscle to plan and execute combat operations in Iraq. This effort required a large number of civilian logistics professionals organized into specialized logistics support teams that were forward deployed to Southwest Asia in order to support combat operations. To integrate all of the logistics teams, ASC centralized its support operations in a Brigade Headquarter called AMC FWD SWA.<sup>5</sup> The brigade headquarters served as the integrating and synchronizing organization for linking strategic and operational logistics support to the tactical Army in Iraq. However, the brigade was organized similar to a Logistic Support Element (LSE) and did not have the capability to connect and synchronize ALT efforts to the overarching logistics support network. This shortfall presented a logistics capability gap.<sup>6</sup> The LSE is a multi-faceted logistics organization which supports military operations. An LSE is largely a civilian organization, tailored to perform doctrinal AMC missions in a forward deployed contingency area. The AMC FWD Brigade, like a LSE, had a predesignated table of

distribution and allowances that identified the skills required to support certain supply and maintenance missions. However, the AMC FWD Brigade was limited in its organization structure and functions. The brigade did not have the ability to coordinate ALT support or provide command and control for AMC national level assets.<sup>7</sup>

In 2004, General Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, stressed the need for logistics transformation at the strategic level during the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee hearings:

Our Army needs a robust, modular, force-reception capability — a dedicated and trained organization able to quickly open a theater and support continuous sustainment throughout the joint operations area. Lastly, we need an integrated supply chain that has a single proponent, who can reach across the breadth and depth of resources in a joint, interagency and multinational theater. As we move from the Current Force to the Future Force, we will build confidence in the minds of the Combatant Commanders by delivering sustainment on time, every time.<sup>8</sup>

General Schoomaker's Congressional testimony confirmed what AMC leaders believed and had been addressing for years. In June 2001, prior to the 9/11 attacks, MG James Snider, AMC Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Acquisition, briefed AMC's role in the Army's transformation process at a National Defense Industrial Association conference. His brief cited the key role AMC would play in Army transformation. He highlighted the importance AMC played in integrating technology, acquisition, and logistics to support transformation and assure the Army's overall readiness with Future Combat Systems.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, in February 2003, General Eric Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff, stressed the need for Army logistics transformation at the Defense Subcommittee Hearings. General Shinseki stated that the Army cannot transform without logistics transformation. He claimed the Army must incorporate what he called "the logistician's view" as its designs future combat systems. He cited the

need for collaboration between the acquisition and logistics communities in order to rapidly deploy and sustain the force.<sup>10</sup>

Armed with Army senior leaderships' support, the AMC commander, General Paul Kern directed his planners to begin reviewing logistics capability shortfalls identified during the first two years of the Global War on Terror (GWOT). They focused on how AMC forward organizations supported the theater commander by providing visibility of all acquisition and contractor support efforts occurring in the theater such as operating supply support activities, maintenance facilities, and transporting supplies and services. The planners believed there was a specific need to consolidate management of all ALT capabilities (contracting, logistics acquisition and technology functions). They proposed establishing standards and doctrine to centralize management of ALT assets at AMC forward locations in a single organization. This initiative would provide unity of effort, central command, and synergy—thereby improving planning and distribution in accordance with mission, enemy, terrain, troops, time available and civilians.<sup>11</sup>

According to the planners' design, the AFSB would be a modular organization capable of providing command and control to all ALT capabilities while supporting an Army Service Component Command or Theater Sustainment Command.<sup>12</sup> This capability was extremely important in view of all the new technologies introduced to combat units to increase their survivability. The AFSB design radically altered the way AMC normally deployed its capabilities. The AFSB organized segments of AMC's vast logistics and sustainment capabilities into one organization and included extensive ALT support. AFSBs would provide regionally focused mission support. Garnering support for the AFSB concept design from the Army staff, AMC obtained approval in July 2006

to establish seven AFSBs.<sup>13</sup> With Department of the Army approval, AMC quickly began staffing AFSBs with the required military and civilian personnel to immediately enhance its ability to support current combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, given the Army's manning priorities for transforming to a modular force, AMC relied heavily on DA civilians and contractors to man AFSBs and continues to man them the same way today.

#### AFSBs and the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Process

Army Field Support Brigades are unique sustainment organizations, organized with a mix of military, DA civilians, and contractors, and deployable subordinate units called Army Field Support Battalions (AFSBns), Logistics Support Elements, and Brigade Logistics Support Teams (BLSTs). These subordinate units establish and provide dedicated direct support to brigade and Echelon Above Brigade (EAB) level units. A major part of AFSBs' support to brigades and EAB level units occurs while units move through the Army's Force Generation Process (ARFORGEN) and deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Army established ARFORGEN as a rotational readiness model, designed to effectively and efficiently generate trained and ready Army forces for combatant commanders at sustainable rotational levels. Through ARFORGEN the Army facilitates and manages the structured progression of increased unit readiness over time, providing recurring periods of available trained, ready, and cohesive units for contingency missions.<sup>14</sup> The Army Force Generation Process synchronizes unit capabilities and readiness reporting with equipping and resourcing strategies. The process establishes priorities based on units' rotational sequences, facilitates equipment cross-leveling, and provides predictability for commanders. The process

places units in one of three categories based on their readiness status—Reset/Train, Ready, and Available.<sup>15</sup>

Army Field Support Brigades execute the majority of its national and field level sustainment support tasks during the Reset phase of the ARFORGEN process. The 2010 Army Posture Statement, Addendum I, explains that Reset is a six-month process, for active duty units, that systematically restores redeployed units to a level of personnel and equipment readiness that permits resumption of training for future missions. The reset phase for reserve component units is a twelve month process. Reset includes tasks required to reintegrate Soldiers and Families, then to organize, man, equip, and train a unit. Reset has three phases, “In Theater”, “At home station”, and “Trained-Ready Pool”. The “In Theater” phase consists of a six-month redeployment phase, which is conducted during the last six months of the deployment. The “At home station” phase occurs during the initial six months after redeployment for active component units and the initial twelve months for reserve component units. Units enter the “Train-Ready Pool” once they receive all of their equipment from sustainment-level maintenance and they are prepared to conduct collective training. This normally begins when units have been redeployed for more than 180 days.<sup>16</sup> In the Reset phase, AFSBs ensure units receive equipment that is, both, maintenance and operational ready for units to use in order to execute future missions. Operational ready means the equipment has the required enablers such as radio, Counter-Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device Electronic Warfare (CREW) System and other systems designed to defend against improvised explosive device. As outlined in the Army’s draft RESET Execution



Order (EXORD), written to provide specific guidance on all requirements that must occur in the RESET phase of ARFORGEN, AFSBs will execute the following tasks:

- Ensure Sustainment-Level Reset and Field-Level Reset at Director of Logistics (DOL) facilities returns equipment to full operational capability in accordance with Army Regulation 750-1 within the 180 days/12 month timeframes.
- Workload DOL facilities to perform Field-Level Reset and Sustainment-Level Reset where appropriate.
- Receive, process, account for, and move 100% of Automatic Reset Induction (ARI) equipment from Theater to sustainment maintenance facilities.
- Perform maintenance on Theater Provided Equipment (TPE) turned in by units and bring it to 10/20 maintenance standards prior to re-issuing to units.
- Ensure Left-Behind Equipment (LBE) is maintained in accordance with the LBE policy, and is ready to redistribute based on HQDA G8, FORSCOM, and/or ASCC guidance.<sup>17</sup>

Army Field Support Brigades execute TPE maintenance, accountability, and retrograde tasks while units are deployed in theater. Theater Provided Equipment is an equipment pool the Army decided to keep in theater to ensure deployed units have the equipment they need to execute their missions. This equipment pool includes various equipment items including armored vehicles, individual soldier body armor, and equipment used to counter improvised explosive devices.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, AFSBs receive, process, and account for ARI while units are in theater. They transfer accountability for ARI destined for induction into sustainment-level accountability and

reset programs. The Army established ARI for equipment that receives extensive wear and tear during use in theater. The equipment is sent back to the continental United States to receive national level maintenance at AMC designated depots.<sup>19</sup> Because ARI equipment is transported from theater to installations and depots in the United States, forward deployed AFSBs and their sister units in CONUS must coordinate to ensure they maintain accountability of the equipment from its reception through maintenance and reissue to units. The coordination between AFSBs also ensures CONUS AFSBs have all the necessary information to report to AMC and Forces Command for equipping priority decisions. This coordination process is a pilot program in development called Lead Materiel Integrator<sup>20</sup>.

In this era of persistent engagement where units are deploying and redeploying constantly, AFSBs have worked to push capabilities designed to increase unit readiness forward to units to resolve units' ARFORGEN issues—including equipment repair and replacement, fielding new equipment, and other materiel readiness issues. They have been relentless in their execution of their ARFORGEN tasks in theater, across CONUS installations, Germany, and Korea. Additionally, they have provided support to contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

#### AFSB's Current Missions and Support Efforts

In order to provide AMC national-level sustainment, integration, and coordination of acquisition, logistics, and technology support to Army units, AFSBs have a dynamic and complex mission set with unique tasks and responsibilities including:

- Provide command and control of assigned or attached Army Field Support Battalions and Brigade Logistics Support Teams and their supporting AMC Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC) staffs.

- Plan for and provide command and control over AMC call forward sustainment maintenance and forward repair activity organizations.
- Coordinate Army prepositioned stocks support.
- Manage and maintain designated left behind equipment.
- Manage and coordinate other AMC national-level sustainment support as required.
- Synchronize, coordinate and provide support to ALT actions between Program Managers/ Program Executive Officers (PM/PEOs) and the supported units.
- Plan and coordinate the deployment, reception, staging, onward movement and integration of AMC and acquisition, logistics, and technology organizations and individuals.
- Synchronize and coordinate other sustainment support (i.e. sustainment maintenance work-loading, Army oil analysis program).
- Plan, integrate, and provide oversight assistance for operational contract support actions where the AFSB or one of its subordinate elements is the requiring activity.
- Account for and arrange deployment support for contractors authorized to accompany the force (CAAF) in support of AFSB missions along with PM/PEO related CAAF and other Army CAAF as directed.
- Provide joint, multinational and/ or interagency support as directed.<sup>21</sup>
- Manage and maintain Pre-Deployment Training Equipment (PDTE)<sup>22</sup>

Army Field Support Brigades also execute tasks that are not listed in the draft Field Manual, but have become a critical part of their overarching mission set of serving as AMC's primary interface to Army forces and the bridge between the generating and operating forces. Examples include assigning depot-level maintenance personnel to AFSBs and forward positioning the personnel in a brigade combat team's area of responsibility. Additionally, tasks such as receiving, processing, and accounting for Automatic Reset Induction equipment and performing maintenance on Theater Provided Equipment are subsets of AFSBs mission of providing AMC national-level sustainment support and serving as key coordinators of related acquisition, logistics, and technology (ALT) support to Army units worldwide.

To effectively review AFSBs on-going missions and support efforts, a quick review of Army Sustainment Command's (ASC) mission priorities is necessary. In a July 2010 ASC mission update brief, ASC's Executive Director of Field Support designated ASC mission priorities as support to contingency operations; support ARFORGEN—reset; manage and account for LBE and Pre-deployment Training Equipment (PDTE); integrate LOGCAP; and maintaining Army Prepositioned Stocks.<sup>23</sup> Army Field Support Brigades execute all of the missions as prioritized by ASC. These missions are continuous and support AFSBs overarching mission as listed in the AFSB interim Field Manual. For clarity this catalog of on-going missions and responsibilities will be grouped in accord with ASC's overarching mission priorities.

*Support Contingency Operations.* AFSBs support contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. They continue to support Army operations by managing and accounting for all TPE in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Army Field Support Brigades also

conducts all field and sustainment-level maintenance on all TPE. They established TPE accountability teams, organized at the regional support activities in Afghanistan and Forward Operating Bases in Iraq, to provide “one-stop maintenance service” to units. For key combat systems, such as the Stryker Fighter Vehicles, Route Clearance Package Equipment, and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protection Vehicle, AFSBs provide sustainment level maintenance and critical battle damage assessment and repair proximate to or within the supported units’ maintenance locations.<sup>24</sup>

Army Field Support Brigades continue to manage the Army’s add-on-armor (AoA) program in Afghanistan and Iraq. This program improves the survivability of soldiers by installing additional armored enhancements on the vehicles. In theater, Germany, Korea, and the continental United States AFSBs work with Program Managers and units to install any AoA enhancements or key equipment modifications. By working with Program Managers and Life Cycle Management Commands, AFSBs perform a key task in the fielding of new equipment. To introduce new equipment and technology systems to units, AFSBs create a one stop single integration fielding system in areas close to, or in unit areas.<sup>25</sup> This was first introduced in Iraq for fielding M1114s Up-armored High Mobility Multi-Purpose vehicles and later for MRAPs in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>26</sup> However, this process has not been documented and formalized in the Army.

Redistribution Property Accountability Assistance (RPAT) teams are key operations for AFSBs. The RPATs assist with maintaining or regaining accountability of TPE, unit equipment identified as ARI, as well as equipment determined as excess to theater requirements. Currently, RPATs in Iraq are executing equipment retrograde

operations to support Responsible Drawdown (RDD) operations. In Kuwait, an Army Field Support Brigade's subordinate battalion bears the lion's share for the preparation and execution of retrograde operations after equipment departs RPAT locations in Iraq. The battalion's efforts focus on receiving the assets from Iraq and processing them in Kuwait to return them to CONUS.<sup>27</sup>

*Support Other Operations.* Army Field Support Brigades support operations that may not be related to their normal mission set. To support critical logistics sustainment missions forward stationed and deployed AFSBs can be placed under the operational control of Theater Support Commands or Expeditionary Support Commands.<sup>28</sup> The AFSB in Germany serves as a key enabling unit to the 21<sup>st</sup> Theater Support Command's mission of providing theater sustainment throughout European Command and African Command Areas of Responsibility in support of United States Army Europe and 7th Army. The AFSBs also support humanitarian operations.<sup>29</sup> In August 2010, the AFSB in Germany delivered fire-fighting equipment to support the Russian fire containment operations that resulted from one of the worst forest fire disasters in Russian history.<sup>30</sup> The AFSBs also store Humanitarian Assistance/ Disaster Relief supplies.

*Support Army Force Generation Process (ARFORGEN).* As identified in the draft Army RESET Execution Order (EXORD) AFSBs play a key role in supporting ARFORGEN. They assist units with completing their tasks as identified in annex I of the draft RESET EXORD. Without AFSBs, support units would not be able to execute all of their reset tasks. Unit level reset tasks include completing their reset plan using the

Automated RESET Management Tool and turning in all ARI equipment prior to redeploying.

Although, LBE is a centrally managed program by ASC, AFSBs facilitate its execution. Army Field Support Brigades, in partnership with Installation Management Command (IMCOM), LCMCs, and other supporting agencies assume responsibility for accountability, sustainment, and transfer of LBE from units. This coordinated team, led by AFSBs, ensures LBE is maintained in accordance with the LBE policy, accounts for, and redistributes equipment based on HQDA G8, FORSCOM, and/or ASCC guidance. The central execution of property accountability for LBE resides solely with AFSBs. Units must coordinate with their supporting AFSB to request LBE management assistance. The AFSBs alert Army Sustainment Command of the units' LBE requirements. The ASC staff then coordinates with Army level commands (ACOMs), Army Service Component Commands, or Direct Reporting Units to define the mission parameters, set conditions for a smooth transfer of equipment, and identify funding sources.<sup>31</sup> Army commands fund all LBE requirements for their units. The funding levels facilitate AFSBs contractor requirements to execute the LBE missions.

Army Field Support Brigades in CONUS account for and conduct maintenance on all Predeployment Training Equipment (PDTE). The AFSBs ensure the equipment meets Army maintenance standards and issue it to units with Army's Requirements and Resourcing Board (AR2B) approved operational needs statements and in accordance with FORSCOM and 1<sup>st</sup> Army training schedule requirements. Predeployment Training Equipment includes a pool of low-density, high-demand standard and non-standard equipment used to supplement MTOE and Mission Essential Equipment List (MEEL).

Authorized by the AR2B on equipment-only TDAs, PDTE is prepositioned at eighteen installations to provide units with equipment that they need for conducting predeployment training. PDTE does not provide all of the equipment units need to conduct training; it only augments units' key training requirements.<sup>32</sup>

*Integrate LOGCAP.* There is no reference to LOGCAP operations in the AFSB interim FM 4-91. Army Sustainment Command executes this mission through its executive directorate for LOGCAP and its subordinate LOGCAP support unit. Key actions for LOGCAP involve transitioning from the LOGCAP III to the LOGCAP IV contract in Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq, as well as maintaining support for the Iraq drawdown efforts. While there are no direct AFSBs missions that fall under the prevue of LOGCAP, AFSBs can benefit from LOGCAP support elements' expertise with providing contract oversight for AFSBs' operational contracts. As currently configured AFSBs have a four-person acquisition/contractor coordination cell that is charged with directing, coordinating, supervising, and training the AFSB staff in ALT related matters. The cell is also responsible for integrating and synchronizing AFSB plans and ALT related support; and providing acquisition and technology policy, planning, and guidance; as well as providing contract oversight assistance for AFSB contract support.<sup>33</sup> The mission to perform all of the related ALT support tasks and provide oversight for AFSBs contractors is a daunting task for the existing AFSB ALT staff. Although AFSBs can call forward acquisition and technology support from ASC, LCMCs or other AMC subordinate units, LOGCAP support elements are functionally co-located with or near AFSBs. The close proximity and functional contracting oversight expertise



that resides with LOGCAP support elements can prove beneficial for AFSBs if AFSBs are allowed to receive contracting oversight support from LOGCAP.

*Maintain APS.* Designated AFSBs maintain, account, and issue APS in CONUS, Kuwait, Qatar, Afghanistan, Korea, Japan, Europe and afloat. This enduring strategic mission reduces the time required to deploy equipment to support combat operations.<sup>34</sup> The subordinate battalions of AFSBs with APS missions are assigned more soldiers on their staffs than AFSBs. These APS Army Field Support Battalions were established prior to the creation of AFSBs. However, they do not have any capabilities or expertise to manage ALT integration and synchronization.

#### ASC and AFSBs Future Roles

Army Field Support Brigades serve as the single point of entry for units seeking support from the AMC materiel enterprise. Their broadly diverse mission will continue to change and evolve as the Army continues to mature its ARFORGEN process and upgrades doctrine and policies accordingly. Additionally, as ASC continues to serve as AMC's operational arm to the field and as its AFSBs synchronize and integrate ALT capabilities, AFSBs will continue to refine support missions in order to provide equipment quickly to the units that need it. Army Sustainment Command's mission as the materiel enterprise field integrator for synchronizing and integrating materiel readiness for the warfighter, including ALT is enduring. However, ASC's methods of execution will change. For example, ASC uses its AFSBs to support contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as ARFORGEN. As ASC continues modifying its support roles based on AMC support priorities and Army needs, AFSBs missions and support tasks will change in order to maintain the existing level of support. Additionally, ASC modifications may add missions to AFSBs. The AFSBs will continue

to execute enduring missions like maintaining and accounting for APS. The AFSBs can assist with the integration of LOGCAP services due to being located in close proximity to each other. Additionally, both organizations have the mission to provide oversight for contractors. This is an area where both AFSBs and LOGCAP support elements can benefit from the combined strengths of each unit.

As an unanticipated consequence of Army logistics transformation, sustainment units outside of the brigade combat teams began deploying without their habitual supported units. Prior to logistics transformation, Army Divisional logistics units deployed as part of brigade task forces. The task forces executed all deployment and mission training as a combined team. Following this training model, logistics units established habitual support relationships with maneuver brigades. These relationships enhanced logistics support because there was one unit responsible for supporting the brigade and the supporting units were knowledgeable on the brigades' equipment, tactics, techniques, and procedures. The delinking of the habitual support relationships created challenges in executing logistics support and ARFORGEN across Forces Command (FORSCOM) installations because there was no single command responsible for logistics. FORSCOM organizations known as Senior Commands (SCs) (Corps / Divisions) are required to serve as both mission commands responsible for the readiness and employment of their subordinate units and as senior commands responsible for the synchronization of ARFORGEN activities.<sup>35</sup>

Additionally, the SCs must coordinate between different organizations responsible for providing different levels of non-tactical logistics support. This logistics support ranges from installation level support, such as maintenance on equipment that

exceeds the units organic maintenance capabilities, to managing the fielding of new equipment. Army Field Support Brigades are working to close the logistics gap by serving as the single point of contact for all non-tactical logistics support. They are working with all organizations and installation activities responsible for non-tactical logistics support. This effort requires key coordination among AFSBs, ASC, and installation support activities, as well as FORSCOM SCs. However, the continued success of AFSBs' field-level reset mission will depend on AMC and ASC's ability to coordinate the consolidation of all organizations that are responsible for executing sustainment-level maintenance under the prevue of AFSBs with the Installation Management Command (IMCOM). This effort will ensure AFSBs have command and control of Director of Logistics (DOL) facilities, including the ability to workload, as they execute sustainment-level and field-level maintenance operations in support of reset. Although, AFSB commanders have been using their existing relationships with DOL managers to provide support to reset operations, AMC, ASC, and IMCOM must establish formal agreements and procedures to ensure AFSBs future success.

The deployment cycle for Theater Sustainment Commands (TSC) and Expeditionary Sustainment Commands (ESC) over the last nine years has created gaps in materiel management above the Brigade Combat Team level (BCT) in CONUS. Logistics transformation eliminated the Materiel Management Center (MMC) along with its responsibility for materiel management at the division, corps, and theater levels. As a result materiel management functions above the BCT were assigned to TSCs, ESCs, and sustainment brigades. Due to the repeated deployments of these organizations, immediately after being established, they have not been able to develop processes and

procedures for executing materiel management functions when residing in CONUS.<sup>36</sup> ASC is currently filling this materiel management gap by serving as the CONUS MMC.<sup>37</sup> As the CONUS MMC ASC is providing materiel readiness visibility and management including property accountability support to FORSCOM. Additionally, ASC is working with IMCOM to realign garrison-level Director of Logistics functions under ASC's control.<sup>38</sup> This realignment will improve ASC's visibility and management of property accountability and maintenance work loading among AMC and FORSCOM maintenance repair activities in CONUS. The goal is to better support ARFORGEN by gaining efficiencies with the standardization and reduction, or elimination where possible, redundancies in maintenance contracts and capabilities.<sup>39</sup>

Currently, sustainment functions on some installations are owned by different commands (FORSCOM, AMC, and IMCOM). The disparity creates challenges for FORSCOM. The SCs are attempting to synchronize ARFORGEN sustainment efforts across the installation. Presently, SCs are coordinating with IMCOM and AMC to oversee the synchronization of ARFORGEN actions. To ensure units meet ARFORGEN readiness standards, SC's are responsible for managing both functional logistics support services and logistics readiness visibility and materiel management.<sup>40</sup> Army Field Support Brigades currently provide ARFORGEN readiness visibility, as well as property accountability efforts for PDTE and LBE. To assist Army Field Support Brigades with tracking and maintaining visibility of equipment as it moves through the field-level reset process ASC created reset support teams (RSTs). These RSTs help track and synchronize maintenance work loading between the field-level reset, LBE, and PDTE programs. These elements assist in coordinating and synchronizing IMCOM

support activities through materiel management and asset visibility for the AFSB commanders.

An ongoing issue with AFSBs increased responsibilities for field-level reset, LBE, and PDTE is AFSBs' ability to provide contractor oversight. With the limited number of government personnel, both military and civilian, assigned to AFSBs, they are not staffed properly to effectively provide appropriate government oversight of their internal contracts and those belonging to DOL facilities, as well as, other organizations responsible for performing field-level maintenance. As cited in a Government Accounting Office Report on Military Operations, dated 26 September 2008, the Army uses contractors to meet many of its logistics and operational support efforts. As an example, the AFSB in Kuwait managed oversight of an Army contract, valued at \$218.2 million, awarded for equipment maintenance and supply services in Kuwait. However, the cost of the contract grew by an additional \$154 million in four years. Yet the number of government personnel available to conduct oversight did not increase.<sup>41</sup> In an environment of reducing fiscal budgets and with the cost of contractor support rising, AFSBs may not be able to continue to increase their logistics support responsibilities. On the other hand, even if funds become available, the limited number of government personnel assigned to AFSBs could hamper the ability to provide proper oversight for increased missions. A reasonable solution may be to require other AMC organizations, like the Life Cycle Management Command's depots, to attach civilian personnel to AFSBs to perform the additional oversight requirements. These attachments should last for more than one year and require contracting officers' support. The support from contracting officers should center on appointing the additional civilians as contracting

officers' representatives (CORs). The CORs will help to ensure that AFSBs can provide effective contract oversight for existing and new missions. Since contractors execute a high percentage of their current mission it is prudent to assume that they (contractors) will also execute future AFSBs missions.

On 14 August 2010, the Army Chief of Staff appointed AMC as the Lead Materiel Integrator (LMI). This mission supports the Army's Title 10 responsibilities for equipping the force. Accordingly, AMC appointed ASC as the execution arm for LMI. This is a new role for ASC; it expands upon its role as materiel field integrator. The current materiel field integrator role for ASC synchronizes and integrates acquisition, logistics, and technology efforts to ensure material readiness for units. The ASC role does not allow ASC to influence the materiel distribution process. However, the future of ASC's role is unknown at the time as AMC, FORSCOM and the Army staff are discussing how the LMI process will work. As the LMI, ASC serves as the Army's single synchronization point to ensure materiel is distributed in accordance with Army equipping priorities.

The Army's Equipping Strategy includes the Army plan to achieve "equipping balance" across the force. The strategy also provides equipping guidance to facilitate the Army's transition to an Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN)-based force.<sup>42</sup> A key element of the strategy is ARFORGEN-based equipping for units to perform their mission requirements. This effort requires a LMI, which provides visibility of equipment reset, both sustainment and field level, across ARFORGEN. In the new LMI role, ASC will also be responsible for managing and executing the Army's materiel distribution and redistribution process in accordance with the Army's Equipping Strategy. To execute this new role, ASC must be able to focus and synchronize sustainment activities across

multiple headquarters, as this will help facilitate strategic decision-making. This strategic decision-making will include sustainment operations for depot-level maintenance for reset of automatic reset induction equipment and redistribution of equipment based on ARFORGEN demand priorities.<sup>43</sup> Currently, there are no written or published policy directives to support the LMI mission. However, there is documentation currently at Headquarters, Department of the Army requesting that ASC be given full authority to focus and synchronize sustainment activities across headquarters in order to execute the LMI role.<sup>44</sup> The LMI role does represent an ASC transforming mission that will require changes to AFSBs' roles and responsibilities.

Army Sustainment Command planners are working with AMC, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics (ASA (ALT)), and Technology and Army staff elements to determine the best ways to meet the demand requirements from the Readiness Enterprise when operating in a resource constrained environment. What does this mean for AFSBs? Although unclear now, AFSBs roles will change to execute the added demands of the LMI mission. However, the roles are not clearly defined at this present time. The Department of the Army Regulation 700-142, "Type Classification, Materiel Release, Fielding, and Transfer" outlines specific responsibilities for AMC and its LCMCs. The responsibilities include the requirement to assist ASA (ALT) in establishing type classification (TC), materiel release (MR), fielding, and transferring policy and program guidance; to release through the materiel release authority (MRA) all materiel that meets requirements outlined in AR 700-142; and to resolve MR issues when there are problems with the requested release or equipment, and they cannot be resolved between the fielding authority and receiving unit.<sup>45</sup>

Further, the regulation designates LCMCs as the materiel release authority and assigns them the responsibility for identifying and providing points of contact to units for equipment after it is fielded. To ensure ASC is involved in the materiel release process changes are needed in AR 700-142 and its accompanying Department of the Army Pamphlet 700-142. The specific changes include adding ASC and its appropriate geographic AFSB as point of contact in the equipment fielding process in paragraph 2-14.4.e. The appropriate wording should include wording such as “LCMC materiel release authority will coordinate with ASC and the appropriate geographic AFSBs on all materiel designated for release to tactical units.” These regulation changes will facilitate AFSBs’ coordination with program managers as AFSBs normally own most of the support and maintenance facilities used to execute fielding of new equipment. Since AFSBs currently work with senior commanders from FORSCOM on all ARFORGEN related issues, adding the materiel fielding requirements associated with the LMI role will prove beneficial. Further, paragraph 2-15 directs program managers (PMs) to coordinate materiel release with the LCMC materiel release authority and the gaining command. However, the regulation needs to change to direct the PMs to coordinate all materiel releases with ASC and the appropriate AFSB.

Additionally, the regulation identifies requirements for gaining commands and units.<sup>46</sup> These requirements include overseeing the receipt, use, maintenance, and support of Army materiel systems and equipment, prepare to field materiel according to established planning and funding guidance, and perform advance planning and coordination with PMs or losing commands for the receipt of new, modified, displaced, and excess equipment, which includes providing facilities to meet fielding requirements.



Assigning gaining units the requirement to plan and oversee fielding requirements is outdated as it places additional stress on units. Quite frankly, units do not have the time or personnel to manage and coordinate materiel fielding. This shortfall has created a gap that FORSCOM has attempted, using its senior commands, to mitigate at CONUS installations. However, AFSBs can execute all materiel release responsibilities for the senior commands just as they currently do for ARFORGEN synchronization. Forward stationed and deployed AFSBs currently support PMs' and units' materiel fielding efforts; such as those used for MRAP fielding. These efforts demonstrate that AFSBs can execute materiel fielding roles and responsibilities as long as AFSBs are included in the planning. Further, Army Regulation 700-142 will require additional changes after AMC, ASA (ALT), ASC, and Army staff planners establish LMI processes and procedures. All procedural and process changes to Army regulations must incorporate requirements for ASC's execution of its LMI mission along with its roles and responsibilities for ARFORGEN.

### Conclusion

Army Field Support Brigades have become critically important for executing all activities associated with the reset phase of the ARFORGEN process. They are leveraging logistics support facilities from IMCOM and FORSCOM to help provide field-level maintenance support for units. Furthermore, they have supported contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, including recent surge efforts to increase U.S. forces, as well as retrograde operations to implement drawdown efforts in Iraq. Although manned with only a few soldiers—approximately 10 according to MTOEs, AFSBs missions continue to grow so the brigade will need more government personnel. They are totally reliant on contractors to execute their missions. In fact, contractors have

become AFSBs' keys to success. However, reliance on a contractor workforce presents other challenges when executing Army missions: Government oversight must be effective; contractors work must be measured by clearly defined metrics; contractor requirements must be scalable. Likewise, AFSB personnel must be competent and experienced at providing logistical oversight for AFSBs contractors. The AFSBs' personnel are expected to be logistics experts and generate mission requirements for logistics service contracts. Then AFSB personnel oversee execution of the contract.<sup>47</sup> Government Accounting Office reports in December 2003 and September 2008 state that the Army needs to address contract oversight.<sup>48</sup> One way of assisting AFSBs with the execution of their contractor oversight roles is to expand the ALT plans and integration branch. This may help reduce negative reports regarding contractors' performance and government oversight. There have been far too many GAO and IG reports on mishandling and mismanagement of government contracts.

Further, AFSBs success will depend on the Army's ability to minimize the challenges associated with establishing and maintaining "equipping balance" in accordance with the Army's Equipping Strategy across the Army. Equipping balance occurs when the Army meets its equipping goal – to ensure that soldiers always have the equipment they need to execute their assigned mission as units' progress through the cyclic readiness model.<sup>49</sup> The Army, AMC, ASA (ALT) and ASC are well on the way to successfully incorporating the LMI role into the AFSB mission. As soon as the LMI role matures and all parties concur on its home, AFSBs can begin executing their support efforts. However, these specific roles and responsibilities have not yet been determined. Currently, AFSBs assist the Army with managing friction in its current

equipping strategy by maintaining property accountability of both PDTE and LBE, as well as executing retrograde operations. This property accountability mission may be expanded as the Army continues to operate in an environment of persistent engagement. As the Army continues to mature its ARFORGEN processes to meet the equipping demands of the Readiness Enterprise, it is inevitable that AFSBs support roles will change and/ or grow. This growth will require additional personnel to assure sustained success. However, the growth will definitely be impacted by the pending reduction of the Army's future operating budget.

## Endnotes

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<sup>13</sup> Army Field Support Brigade Approval Memorandum, “Army Field Support Brigade Augmentation Table of Distribution and Allowances Design Approval”, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army July 2006).

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